

without ceasing to do evil, and hoped to be saved from the suffering without turning away from the sin. During some fresh excess of his wife despair began to fasten on his mind, and he would be contented to sink to the uttermost depths of disgrace. But the divine spark could not be utterly quenched. Again conscience would be touched, and wrestle with these feelings of despair. At last he thought his only chance was to leave the place, change his name, and seek some spot where he would find work, and not be known. He satisfied his conscience to abandon his wife, because he had tried every means to reclaim her, and the task was hopeless; and while he remained beside her it was impossible for him to become steady and recover his former position. These thoughts had been passing through his mind for some time, when one night he found his wife more intoxicated than usual. To procure the liquor she had sold some of the most essential articles of domestic comfort. This decided him. He sought not for sleep, but as she lay in the insensibility of drunkenness, he packed up his few remaining articles of clothing, and left the house before the dawn of day. He turned not to look on his still insensible wife. The dark spirit of the hour was too intense to allow any loving remembrance to struggle forth through his heart's bitterness. He closed the door and went forth without ever casting "one lingering look behind."

It was summer time, and he got to the outside of the town before daylight. He had decided to take a cross country road, and seek some place out of the common route of passers. Day dawned, and the sun's rays gilded the mountain tops. The dewdrops clustered on the hawthorn, and on the wayside flowers. The lark's matin song swelled loud and sweetly from the sky; all without was beauty, order, and harmony. God's works, how fair, how lovely, how placidly calm! Man's spirit, apart from God, how gloomy, dark, and disordered! How different the spirit within that erring and suffering man, and the spirit without. He walked brooding o'er his condition and blaming every one but himself for his misfortunes. He had walked rapidly in excitement during the whole day, and was approaching a small hamlet which lay a little out of the road, surrounded by hills. It was a lovely summer eve—the "kye were coming home," and the children were romping in the fields. As he approached he observed about six or seven persons looking along the road as if they expected some one, and when he came up to them they inquired if he was the lecturer. He answered he was not, but a traveller in search of work, and that he would feel much obliged if they could inform him of a decent lodging he could go to. One of them turned back with him to do so, and informed him that he and his friends were looking out for a gentleman who was a stranger to them, whom they expected to deliver a lecture on total abstinence that evening for their Temperance society, which they had lately established in that place. "There's no doubt Temperance is a very good thing," observed the traveller, "but I am not sure that teetotal can be right; its not in the Scriptures. A man should be moderate, but he's not called on to do without any; a little will do him good." "It never did me any good, and I took it for many a long year," responded his companion, "and no doubt you are aware, sir, there are a large number of persons who cannot take a little and be moder-

ate, and, you'll admit, we should be ready to give up our little drop for example sake, it is the best means we can adopt to induce the drunkard to become sober." The traveller, even while his conscience told him that the drinks had never done him any good either, replied, nevertheless, "That sober men were not called on to give up their liberty because others abused theirs."

The villager, while not seeking to dictate, stated facts and principles with the firmness of conviction. He alluded to the history of some families in the neighbourhood, members of which had been ruined through the drinking customs. He showed that it was not only the duty and interest of their relatives to make sacrifices to set such captives free, but also of every Christian member of society to do so too. He described the ruin of some of these people. The traveller winced, for some of these cases resembled his own. They passed on to the lodgings, and as it still wanted some time to the hour of meeting, the villager said if he would go with him to hear the lecture he would come back and take him. He gave his consent, through a feeling of the other's kindness in having procured him lodgings. Afterwards, when the villager came, he had enjoyed a wash and refreshment, and felt quite disposed to go, as it would interest his mind and give rest to his body also; he wished to think about anything new to him rather than look back on what he had left behind. When they arrived at the school-room it was decently filled. The audience, like most of Scotch audiences, was sitting in expectant silence. The meeting was opened with a hymn invoking the blessing of God on their efforts to reclaim drunkards. The lecturer was one whose heart was in his subject; his eloquence was that of thought rather than manner. He described the delusions of the drinking custom, showing that good, kind, and generous hearted people were the most likely to be deceived by its pretensions, and welcome it with open arms, until it wound its folds around them. He described the ruin of tradesmen and working-men, by its leading them to neglect their business and families, while they wasted their money and time in taverns. He appealed to them, if every one of them did not know of husbands, wives, sons, and daughters, in every class of life who had lost their characters and position through these drinking customs. He called on them as men and Christians to join in banishing these evil customs from society. His words were as goads. His was the eloquence of faith. At a moment all difficulties were overlooked by the conviction of the truth. The audience was filled with fervour and zeal to remove evil and spread happiness. The force of habit, appetite, and interest was for a moment quieted. At the conclusion of the meeting a number signed the pledge. The traveller had sat deeply interested. The descriptions of the ensnaring and pernicious effects of strong drink came home forcibly to his own experience. He could not controvert one point of the lecture, yet he did not feel impelled to sign the pledge. Some new ideas had come to him, but only as passing lights seen in a mist. The villager had observed his serious air, and felt that interest in him which we often feel towards those who are labouring under concealed sorrow. With the delicacy of true sympathy he did not attempt to penetrate the causes of the evidently depressed spirits of the traveller, but showed his sym-

pathy in kindly attentions. It fortunately happened that they were of the same trade. The villager wanted a journeyman, and the other gladly engaged with him. When questioned by the villager what he thought of the lecture, his answer was that all his descriptions were "ower true," that none could gainsay his statements. "If so its your duty to join us." "I cannot see that; I think I can command myself; I am not a drunkard." "Have you no friends or relatives that are intemperate?" Here his conscience winced, and he felt that he had been a drunkard. Yet pride resisted, and he replied, that he did not feel called on to join. He once attempted to find solace in the tavern, and went to spend an evening there, thinking he might thus banish thought. But his old companions were not there, and with the two or three who were there he felt no sympathy. Instead of banishing reflection the scene excited reflection. He thought on his own follies, while repelled by the grossness of those present. He remembered the wretched home and character he had aided to produce, and when he thought for a moment upon the lower depths to which she whom he still loved might sink, and the destitution she was in, he started with a convulsive pang from his seat, for he could sit no longer. His mind was racked with conjectures about the condition of his wife, and he sought in vain for rest to his troubled spirit. Fortunately for him he had come into a purer moral atmosphere. His employer invited him to public worship, and, in his lonely state, the truths he heard operated forcibly on his mind. He could not banish them. When asked to tea on a Sunday, and he surveyed the family circle, its happy faces beaming with affection, he thought of his absent wife and her condition. When he put on the new garments he had procured, he thought on the ragged condition he had left her in, and he could not be happy. He felt she would not have abandoned him, but had born with his faults to the last, and tried to save him. When he attempted to pray he could not implore the Divine blessing on what he was doing. He had not forgiven or shown mercy; how could he expect his Heavenly Father to forgive him? A continued wrestling went on in his mind. He could not long remain in that state, for when truth comes men must welcome the light and go on to perfection, or, if not, its spirit is quenched, and they become darker than ever. A second lecture was given by the same gentleman who delivered the first. This time he dwelt on our duty to others more fully—the father's duty towards his erring son, the wife towards her husband, and the husband towards his wife, and the Christian towards his neighbours. He related some touching cases where relations had, by self-denial and persevering kindness, been instrumental in leading each other from habits of intemperance. He impressively appealed to the consciences of his audience to come forward and sign the pledge; that they might be instrumental in reforming their friends and neighbours. At the close of the lecture the traveller signed the pledge. He felt easier when he had done so; still he kept the same reserve as to his history; but the desire to seek and rescue his wife became stronger. As he sat at the fireside, imagination would transform it to his "ain fireside," and his wife sitting beside him enjoying their Temperance home. Then doubt would breathe a palsyng suspicion that it would be impossible to reclaim her. Then faith and hope would